

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 were cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. New claims 7 and 8 were added. Claims 7 and 8 remain pending in the present application. The rejections set forth in the Office Action are respectfully traversed below.

Rejections under 35 USC §103

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC §103 over **Rucker et al.** (USP 5,351,066). Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 USC §103 over **Rucker**, in view of **Sumiyoshi et al** (USP 6,278,497). These rejections are now moot since claims 1-6 were cancelled.

New claims 7 and 8 distinguish over the prior art for at least the reason that the present claimed invention recites a keyboard having an ENTER/RETURN key and a SPACE key in centrally juxtaposed keys of a lowermost key array (corresponding to a home position for left and right thumbs of a user); a BACKSPACE key being an extreme right key in a middle key array; and a DELETE key being an extreme right key in an uppermost key array – all of these ENTER/RETURN key, SPACE key, BACKSPACE key, and DELETE key in these positions being a *normal state* of the keyboard *without any key reassignment*. These features are supported, for example, in Fig. 4(b) and the corresponding descriptions in the specification. No new matter was added.

Rucker discloses space bar halves 22 and 24 which may be *programmed* with “alternate” designations, such as for generating a signal corresponding a letter, number, curser movement, or other designations (column 12, lines 6-16). Such additional programming increases the cost for such keyboards. An additional software program for key reassignment will

need to be purchased and installed. In addition, the key designations (such as the label "Enter") on the actual key itself would no longer correspond to the re-programmed signal being generated, thus creating confusion.

In contrast, the present claimed invention avoids the added costs and confusion associated with re-programming keys with key assignments different than the normal state or original designations of the keyboard. As noted above, claim 7 recites specific positions for the ENTER/RETURN key, SPACE key, BACKSPACE key, and DELETE key that would be the "normal state" of the keyboard "*without* any key reassignment." The prior art teaches away from these claimed features. For at least these reasons, the present claimed invention patentably distinguishes over the prior art. Therefore, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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